

Against Rudeness and Ill-Manners upon  
Account of Difference in Religion.

-A  
S E R M O N

Preached at the  
Abbey-Church

I N  
St. A L B A N S  
February 13. 17<sup>14</sup>/<sub>15</sub>.

On Occasion of the CHARITY-SCHOOL  
set up in that Town.

By PHILIP FALLE, Prebendary of Durham,  
Rector of Shenley in Hartfordshire, and former-  
ly Chaplain-Attendant to His Majesty King  
WILLIAM.

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To the **WORSHIPFULL**

William Grimston, <i>Esq;</i>	John Gape, <i>Esq;</i>
Thomas Arris, <i>Esq;</i>	Thomas Gape, <i>Esq;</i>
John Cotesworth, <i>Dr.</i>	William Neale, <i>Esq;</i>
of <i>Physick</i> ,	and <i>Alderman</i> ;

**A N D**

The Reverend Mr. Cole, *Rector of the*  
*Abbey-Church*;

**TRUSTEES for the CHARITY-SCHOOL**  
**in St. A L B A N S.**

Gentlemen,

**W**HEN your Desire to have this Sermon made publick, was signified to me in your very civil Letter, I thought I could not pass it off with a Denial, and postpone your Satisfaction to my Love of Privacy and Retirement, without offending in some sort against the Good Manners I had been recommending to others. And certainly when there appears so favourable a Disposition in Gentlemen of the Laity, to promote Religion and Virtue, it would very ill become

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come

come Us of the Clergy not to second them, and readily concur with them in all we can do, whose Duty it is to lead the way, and prevent Others in every Good Work. Seeing then you are pleased to think that this Discourse may be of some Use in the World, I am willing to flatter my self with the same Hope, and do accordingly at your Request send it abroad, and commit it to the Divine Blessing. If through the Perverseness of Men, and the Bad Temper of the Times, it fail of Success, still it will remain an Instance and Testimony of my Respect to you, and of my Zeal to serve, in the best way I am able, a Corporation, to which I am indebted, not only as Neighbour, but, which is somewhat more, as one of it's Honorary Members. I am,

Gentlemen,

Your most humble, and

most obedient Servant,

PH. FALLE



## II. KINGS. II. 23, 24.

3. *And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: And as he was going up by the Way, there came forth little Children out of the City, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up thou bald-head! Go up thou bald-head!*

4. *And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the Name of the Lord: And there came forth two She-Bears out of the Wood, and tare forty and two Children of them.*

**W**E have here an Example of great Severity against rude, ill-manner'd, and wicked Children. But before I proceed further upon these Words, I judge it necessary to touch at some Passages in Sacred Story, which will give great Light to the Fact here related: And in order to that, we must look so far back as the Revolt of the Ten Tribes from the House of David, under the Leading of Jeroboam.

Before that Breach, the State and Church of Israel were but One; and as Jerusalem was the Capital of the Kingdom, so the Temple standing there, was the Place whither, by God's Appointment, the Twelve Tribes went up at Solemn Times to worship. But the State and Nation being split into Two, there followed a Rent in the Church likewise. For Jeroboam, now King over the Ten Tribes, considering that if his new Subjects continued to go up, as they were wont, to Jerusalem, and there join in Worship with their Brethren

of *Juda* and *Benjamin*, who adhered to the House of *David*, it might be a means to turn their hearts back to that House, and to subvert his Throne; considering this, I say, he resolved to make such a Change in Religion, as should break all Intercourse of this sort betwixt them. He caused two *Golden Calves* to be set up, one in *Beth-el*, the other in *Dan*, with Altars and Priests, not of the *Levitical Order*, but abject Persons, taken indifferently out of any Tribe; and then tells the People, that having brought Religion home to them, they needed not be at the trouble of any more Journeys to *Jerusalem*: *Beth-el* and *Dan* stood nearer and as it were at their Doors, and there he had fixed proper Objects for their Adoration \*. He himself, to authorize by his Example the Abomination he had introduced, offered and burnt incense upon the Altar in *Beth-el*†: On which account, and because it continued to be the chief Seat of Idolatry under the succeeding wicked Kings of *Israel*, *Beth-el* obtained the Name of the King's Chapel, as we read, *Amos* VII. 13.

Now though *Jeroboam* gained his end by means of this Schism, and Idolatry prevailed to a great height among the Ten Tribes, yet the Defection was not so intire, but that some Good Men were left, who would not be brought off from the true Worship of God. Such were the Prophets *Abijah*, *Micaiah*, *Elijah*, and *Elisha*, who all dwelt in the midst of these Tribes, and often and boldly reprov'd their impious Masters to their Face. Further, in *Beth-el* it self, where the *Golden Idol* was set up, stood a College or School of the *Sons of the Prophets*‡, who were Young Men devoted to the Study of God's Law, and living in Community under the direction of those holy and inspired Persons so often mentioned in Scripture by the name of Prophets; whom in reverence they stiled *Fathers*, as reciprocally and in testimony of affection, they were

\* 1 Kings. XII, 26. &c. † ibid Verse. 33. ‡ 2 Kings. ii. 3. called

called *Sons* by them. 'Tis indeed surprizing that *Jeboam*, when he cast off the *Levites*, and *Priests* of the *Lord*\*, did not at the same time take away this College also, which whilst it stood, must remain a Nursery of the true Religion, and a Seminary of Prophets, who would not fail to inveigh aloud against the Superstition he had brought in. But herein the Wisdom of God over-ruled the Wickedness of Man: The *Sons* of the *Prophets* kept their Station at *Beth-el*, not without good Effect we may be sure on some of the Inhabitants; though others, and they probably the much greater Number, complied with the Change, and followed the Religion of the Court.

Where Two Religions are, there will arise Disputes among Men; and Disputes will beget Animosities, and harsh Usage on both sides; yet with this difference, that a False Religion, especially if back'd by Power, always inspires a more bitter and intemperate Spirit. What happens elsewhere, must needs have happened at *Beth-el*, and I take the Fact in the Text, to which I am now coming, to be an instance of the rude and contumelious Behaviour of the Profelytes to Idolatry, towards the Worshippers of the true God.

The Prophet *Elisha* was on the Way to *Beth-el*, to visit the *Sons of the Prophets*, who were now become his Charge, by the Assumption of *Elijah* into Heaven not many days before. He was already climbing up the Ascent which led into the City, when there met him a Company of *Children*, come out of the Place, who fell to abusing and affronting him. By all Circumstances they were the Children of the Idolatrous Citizens, and by his Habit and Garb, or some other Token, knew him to be a *Prophet of the Lord*, a Character which their wicked Parents had taught them to hate and revile. Perhaps they were instructed before, and sent out on purpose to insult the Good Man, of

\* II. Chron. xi. 14.

whose coming some notice had been given in the Town. *Elisha* it seems was *bald*, which some Expositors have erroneously attributed to his great Age, not considering that we find him Prophecying under the Reign of *Joash*, above Fifty Years after this. He could not therefore, in all likelyhood, be so very Old at this Time. *Baldness* is an Infirmary or Blemish of Humane Nature, incident to some, and signifies nothing to the making a Man good or bad. Nevertheless wanting other Matter to reproach him with, this was laid hold on, and the Children deride him for it, crying out, *Go up thou bald-head! Go up thou bald-head!* the repeating of which Words twice in the Text, implies that they pursued him long with their Din and Clamour, and ceased not *mocking* and hooting at him till the Punishment inflicted on them put a stop to their Insolence.

This was great Rudeness and Ill-manners towards a Stranger, who came peaceably to their Town, though there were no more in it than so. But there lay at the bottom a Malignity and Spight to him, upon account of his Function and Relation to God, that exceedingly aggravated their Fault. And some learned Men have thought, that when they bid him *go up, go up*, they meant by those Words to reflect on the Report then newly spread of *Elijah's* Translation, and to make Jest of that Story: As if they had said, 'Tis given out among those of thy Sect and Way, that thy Master *Elijah* is gone up into Heaven: *Go thou up* also after him, *go!* and let the World be rid of you both!

The Vengeance that followed was sudden and terrible. The Prophet, moved by a Divine Impulse, would like not to be pretended to, or drawn into Example, any now-a-days, upon whatsoever Provocation, crying these wicked Children *in the Name of the Lord*; and immediately *two She-bears*, Creatures always fierce by their own Nature, but then grown much more so by being made the Executioners of God's Justice, rush out of an adjoining Wood, seize upon *two and forty* of the Children.



children, and tear them to Pieces *And he went up from*  
*ence unto Beth-el: And as he was going up by the Way,*  
*re came forth little Children out of the City, and mocked*  
*and said unto him, Go up thou bald-head! Go up*  
*bald-head! And he turned back, and looked on them,*  
*curfed them in the Name of the Lord: And there came*  
*two She-bears out of the Wood, and tare forty and two*  
*children of them.*

Many ordinary Readers have, I doubt not, stuck at  
 this Passage; not conceiving how a Company of Chil-  
 dren, making themselves a little foolish Mirth and  
 sport with a Traveller, whom they chanced to light on  
 the Way, should deserve so severe a Punishment.  
 But such have not weighed the Circumstances of the  
 Case, as I have stated and represented them. Briefly, here  
 is a Struggle in the same Town, betwixt the true Re-  
 ligion and Idolatry: The Idolaters, supported by the  
 Government, which was on their side, grow petulant  
 and insolent: A Prophet of the true God comes to the  
 Town: The Children of those Idolaters, taught and  
 on by their Parents, meet him, and abuse him.  
 Was a Bald-headed Man a Monster in Israel? Had such  
 one never been seen among them before? Many, no  
 doubt, whom they could pass by quietly enough. But  
 this Man was a Servant of that God; whose Worship  
 they had renounced, and hated; and for the sake of  
 his Office, they affront the Man. Was it a light Mat-  
 ter, that the true Religion, and the Ministers of it,  
 should fall so much under the Public Scorn, as to be-  
 come the Jest and Sport of Children? Here then was  
 impiety joyned with Ill-manners; and whoever takes all  
 these Circumstances together, he will not think it  
 strange that God should vindicate his own Honour,  
 and the Dignity of Sacred Functions, in a manner fit  
 to strike Terror into That, and all Future Ages.

The Text being thus cleared, I now come to raise Observations from it, and these which follow seem to me very obvious and natural.

- I. That Difference in Religion has mostly this unhappy effect and tendency, to sowre the Tempers of Men, and banish Civility and Good-Manners from among them.
  - II. That 'tis more especially the Property of a False Religion, to inspire an abusive and contumelious Spirit.
  - III. That Persons in Holy Offices have greatly suffer on this account.
  - IV. That the Ill Example of Parents in this particular has a bad influence upon, and corrupts the Behaviour of their Children.
  - V. That hence appears the Necessity of a good Education of Children; which then only is to be counted such, when at the same time that they are instructed in the Principles of sound Religion, they are taught Good Manners also.
  - VI. That the many *Charity-Schools* dispersed over the Kingdom, may be made greatly serviceable to the same Purpose.
- Lastly*, I shall endeavour to stir up your Bounty and Liberality, for the Support of *this School* set up among your selves. And because I foresee these Matters will take up somewhat more Time than usual, I bespeak your Patience fore-hand.

I. That Difference in Religion has mostly this happy effect and tendency, to sowre the Tempers of Men, and banish Civility and Good Manners from among them.

For Men to treat one another rudely, and angrily when they stand in each other's way, in their Chace after Gain, Riches, Preferments, Honours, or whatever else they call by the Name of *Interest*, is

be wondered at, though far from allowable. This  
 is ever the manner of the World, and very suitable  
 that such Pursuits should awaken the worst of Hu-  
 man Passions. But what have those Passions to do  
 with Contention for Truth, were it so that Men, when  
 they differ about Religion, strove for nothing else?  
 'Tis not meant therefore that the Temper here  
 complained of, flows as naturally and necessarily from  
 Difference in Religion, as any other Effect from its  
 Cause. Experience has shewn that among Wise and  
 Good Men, sincere Lovers of Truth, Debates and  
 Controversies of Religion can be managed with great  
 Labour and Calmness. And the Scripture plainly  
 proposeth it: Else it would not be at the pains to  
 give us Rules for our Behaviour in such Encounters,  
*Tim. xi. 24, 25. The Servant of the Lord must  
 strive, but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient,  
 meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if  
 peradventure will give them repentance to the acknow-  
 ledging of the Truth.* But when Worldly selfish Views,  
 and sinister Ends, intermingle with those Debates,  
 Religion degenerates into Faction, and the Strug-  
 gle is not for Conviction, but for Superiority, Power,  
 Legal Settlements; when Men by making their  
 Religion to triumph, aim at triumphing and rising  
 above they themselves along with it; when they are  
 the least and most forward to engage, who are the least  
 qualified for it, Men drove on by a blind furious Zeal  
 without Knowledge; when Artisans, and Mean Persons,  
 can hardly treat together about the Common Af-  
 fairs of Life, with Decency, and proper Language,  
 the Business of their Callings, to go and squab-  
 ble with the first they meet, who is not of their Opini-  
 on; when Religious Disputes, I say, are carried on  
 for such Views, pursued for such Ends, and managed  
 by such Hands, 'tis in vain to hope for fair Quarter,  
 or civil Treatment: What you are to look for, is  
 angry Looks, and hard Words, instead of Reason and  
 Argument.

A Disagreement in Religion, even betwixt People of different Nations, may do mischief enough, provoking them to mutual Injuries: As we see the Example of the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, who grew so enraged on both sides, because they could not agree about the Place of God's Worship, that they denied each other the Common Rights of Hospitality. The *Samaritan Villagers* would not receive our Saviour because they saw he was going to worship at *Jerusalem*, Luk. ix. 53. And a *Woman* of the same Country, marvelled at his asking of her a little Water to drink, seeing *the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans*. John. iv. 9. How much ill Usage of this Men meet with abroad, among Strangers of another Religion, I need not observe.

But this is a small Matter, compared to what happens when the Quarrel breaks out at home, and a People whom the same Laws and Government should unite, fall into these Altercations and this Sowing among themselves: When the Spirit of Religious discord goes forth among those who live and dwell together, as (for Example) Fellow-Citizens, and Inhabitants of the same Town. Then it is that Society which is one of the greatest Blessings of Human Life becomes the greatest Curse and Misery. They do not go from one another: Their Trades, Occupations, and Worldly Concerns, have fixed and determined their Abode in the same Place, and as it were on the same Spot. And so they seem to be linked and chained together, only that they may have Opportunity to vex, teaze, and bite each other.

What a frightful Picture could I make of some of our *Corporations* at this day, divided as they are by Religion, and torn with Factions! The nearest Neighbours not vouchsafing one another a Civil Salutation, People with clouded Looks, and contracted Brows, either passing by in a sullen Silence, or snapping angrily at each other: All the Bands of Peace and Unity quite dissolved, and no Charity left but as it is confined to a Party: Censuring and Back-biting



and Malice, Spight and Ill-Will, like so many  
 ies, raging o're the Town: Hardly any of those  
 al Regards and Respects to be seen, whereby a  
 nction of Persons should, at least for Order-sake,  
 preserved, but an Universal Rudeness and Incivi-  
 every where, as though the Place were inhabited  
 wild Savages and *Americans*. There is nothing here  
 ggerated, and too much of this, I doubt, you feel  
 ing yourselves.

roility has it's Name from that more polite and hu-  
 Behaviour, which Men were suppos'd to acquire,  
 living together in *Towns* and *Cities*. But such a  
 ange have our Religious Dissentions made, that the  
 best way now for one to lose all Good Manners, if  
 ad any before, is to go and take up his Residence in  
 e such Place as I have described. There he will soon  
 to abuse and spit in every Body's Face who does  
 think as he doth, though he thinks never so absurd-  
 to be pragmatistical and assuming, and the less he un-  
 stands things, to be so much the more positive and  
 emptory in them; to be eternally contradicting  
 ers, whilst he himself will brook no Contradict-  
 n; to give great Libertiesto his Tougue, and make  
 y-free and bold with the most respectable Charac-  
 ; in fine, to allow himself in such Asperity and  
 olence of Manners, as is a Nuisance to Society,  
 a Scandal to Human Nature, and think it a Proof  
 is Zeal for Religion.

Were such a Behaviour the natural Consequence of  
 igion, so that a Man could not be Religious un-  
 he was rude and ill-manner'd, it would be a  
 at Objection against Religion, and would tempt  
 y to think it were better that there was no Re-  
 on at all in the World; as in Fact it has upon this  
 and been said by Sceptics and Atheists. But so far  
 Religion from being in fault, that it considers Good  
 ners as a Part of it self, and as a Branch of the great  
 y of *Justice*; against which he no less offends, who

denies another the Debt of Civility, owing to  
 than if he with-held whatever else is his most unde  
 ed Property. Nor were it difficult to shew, that  
 thing would more contribute to polish and refine  
 Manners of Men, and bring them to an easy, dec  
 and handsome Deportment towards each other,  
 Religion, were the excellent Rules of it exactly pr  
 fed: And I dare lay it down accordingly for a Ma  
 That no Man is, or can be, a *Civil Person*, or in  
 a *fine Gentleman*, in the true Sense of the Word, wh  
 not a *good Christian*.

How is it then that so many rude things are d  
 and put to the Account of Religion? Why, so  
 times a mistaken, tho' well-meant, Zeal for the  
 Religion, joyned to much Offense, and great Pro  
 cation, given by unreasonable Adversaries, begets  
 digitation; and That breaks out into warm and an  
 Expressions, not to be justified, no not on such an  
 cation, and in such a Cause, when against Char  
 and contrary to Good Manners: For as the Apo  
 excellently says, *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Re  
 tiousness of God* †. But as we commonly observe, t  
 Men are more Zealous for Error and Falshood th  
 for Truth, so 'tis likewise very certain that all Z  
 coming from that Quarter, has a deeper Tincture  
 Bitterness in it: Which brings me to my *Second*  
*servation*,

II. That 'tis more especially the Property of  
 False Religion, to inspire an abusive and contum  
 lious Spirit.

If the Example in the Text did not prove t  
 sufficiently, numerous Instances might be brou  
 from elsewhere, shewing that the Zealots of Fa  
 Religions have ever distinguished themselves by a  
 culiar Virulency of Temper, and Rudeness of M  
 ners, unless where they have been restrained and ke  
 within bounds by Laws: As in the case of the Pap

† James i. 20.

ongst us, whose Unchristian Spirit we are not unacquainted with; but feel not the dire effects of it so sensibly as other *Protestants* do, who live in Countries where that Religion governs and rules, and being outnumbered and over-powered, are dealt with accordingly.

And it were to wished that some People, who have always boasted of their great Distance from *Popery*, should make that Pretence good, by shewing a better Spirit.

I wish it, - as for the sake of our Common Peace, also for this Reason, That had their Usage of us, and our Differences, been more temperate and becoming, they would not have drawn us to Reprizals and Retaliations, which we our selves must and do condemn, when the Heat of Debate is over.

How a False Religion works Men up to this Spirit, may be accounted for many ways; but if we suppose Religion, that instead of teaching it's Followers to be humble, and to think soberly and modestly of themselves, blows them up with Pride, Presumption, Self-conceit, we may rest here without seeking farther.

For when Men have learnt to make Comparisons, always to their Advantage; to say with the *wise*, Lord, *I thank thee that I am not as other Men*; to arrogate and challenge all Godliness to themselves; what can the Effect of this be, but to make Men, in the Pride of their Hearts, think Civil Treatment and Courteous Language too good for those, in their Opinion, stand so much below them? It will operate in Religion, as in Common Life: Self-conceit of Spiritual Advantages will induce Ill-manners, no less than a Man's over-valuing himself, and undervaluing others, upon any other Score whatsoever.

That Cynical Behaviour in some of our wilder Churches, which they affect, and therein place much of Christianity: a Sign that they understand that Religion well, which, as it is in all other respects the best, so is the best natured, and the Civilest Institution in the World.



I am next to shew,

III. That Persons in Holy Offices have greatly suffer on this account, this Ill-manner'd Spirit sing them out above others for the Objects of it's Fury.

Could I pass over this Head, and drop it, with further animadversion, I would gladly do so; because I cannot speak to it without expostulating for Rudeness with which We the Ministers of this Church are treated, so 'tis scarce consistent with modesty, a Man to press a matter wherein he is himself really interested. But I must not for such Consideration over-look my Text.

However, laying aside other Matters of just Complaint, as the Injuries and Scurrilities of the People which observes no sort of Decency towards us, I will only note this Circumstance, which brings the Proper Case and our own to a very near Resemblance; namely, that as the Indignity offered him was while he was Travelling *on the Way*, so the Publick Streets and Roads, which are open to the meanest and most sordid of the People, seem to be shut up to us, when we resolve to bear with patience and in silence, Scoffings and Revilings, the rude Justlings and Ellings, and possibly somewhat worse, that we are exposed to as we go along. Our *Habit*, which was given us for an Honourable Distinction, and *to make us known to the People*, as the LXXIVth Canon expresses it, in order to have their Civil Regards, is so far from protecting us from Insults, that it draws them upon us and serves only as a Mark to lay us the more open to them. So that if the Humour goes on, that may happen which was never yet seen among any People.

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† The true, ancient, and flourishing Churches of Christ, ever desirous that their Prelacy and Clergy, might be had as worthy outward Reverence, as otherwise regarded for the Worthiness of Ministry, did think it fit by a Prescript Form of decent and comely Apparel, to have them known to the People, and thereby to receive the Honour and Estimation due to the special Messengers and Officers of Almighty God: We therefore —————



Heathen or Christian, the Clergy of the National Church reduced to the necessity of going under a Disguise, to keep off Affronts from their Character, where it appears openly. And let me tell you, that this Rudeness to an Order of Men so treated in no other Part of the World, has by Strangers been taken notice of, with severe Reflections for it on the Manners of the Nation.

It may be they who abuse and revile the Clergy, do it not all upon the same Principle. Some do it, because they are of another Belief, and Sect of Religion: Others, because they are of no Belief at all, and hate all Religion. But the former have shewn the Example, and led the way, and thereby raised a Spirit which, like an Evil Demon, they themselves will never be able to lay down again, should it be hereafter their Case to suffer under it, as 'tis ours at present. Those Multitudes of Atheists, Libertines, and Men of no Religion, who now combine and joyn with them in the Cry against us, will then turn against them, carry the War into their Quarters, and throw ten times more Scorn on their Teachers, than they ever did on the Clergy of this Church. *For if they have done these things in a green tree, what will they do in a dry?*

How much better and wiser had it been for them and us, by a decent Deportment towards each other, to have secured on either side the Honour of Sacred Ministrations, and thereby cut off the Occasion, which, from a contrary Behaviour, Profane and Ungodly Men have taken to despise Religion it self! to which 'tis plain a Mortal Wound has been given, and who they are that by their Petulancy and Rudeness have most contributed to it, God will judge. But enough of this, and less I could not say without looking quite beside my Text.

Into this State then of Barbarism have our foolish Contentions brought us. The Aversion, Strangeness, and Incivility we shew one another, can be called by no other Name. There wants only this further to complete

pleat the Evil, that it be propagated to Posterity and that the Children now born, and those yet unborn, learn to be as Rude and Ill-Manner'd as the Fathers; so that as fast as one Generation wears off another may succeed as fowre as the former; which has been our Unhappiness hitherto, and how to apply a Remedy to it, may well deserve to be considered. 'Tis what I propose to my self, under the Heads that remain unspoken to; Previous to which must be my *Fourth Observation*;

IV. That the Ill Example of Parents in this particular, has a bad influence upon, and corrupts the Behaviour of their Children.

The Children in the Text had never shewn such Rudeness to the Prophet, if they had not been taught to hate his Character, together with the True Religion, by their Idolatrous Parents, as these before had been taught by theirs. For from the Beginning of the Schism under *Jeroboam*, to *Elisha's* Time, we compute it somewhat above Seventy Years, the ordinary Course of Three, and sometimes Four, Generations. The Fathers of these Children, were themselves the Children, or perhaps Grand-Children, of those who first had gone into that Schism, and departed from the true Worship of God.

Much about so many Years ago, those unnatural Feuds broke out among our selves, which as they then filled the Land with *Confusion and every evil Work*, so have they banished Peace and Charity out of it ever since; never to return, so long as we transmit our Passions and Animosities to our Children, as part of the Inheritance we leave them, in like manner as we our selves derive our present ill Temper and Spirit from those who went before us.

Were Families looked into, how many would be found, where the first thing done to Children, is to root and fix them in a Hatred of that Religion, which the Parents right or wrong happen not to like, as suppose the Established Religion of their Country! The

poor

poor little Creatures never hear the Church mentioned, nor it's Worship, nor it's Ministers, but with opprobrious Epithets, and in Terms of greatest Contumely and Rudeness. And what must the after-conduct of their Life be, when the Foundation is laid in Uncharitableness and Ill-manners, when they are taught to revile as soon as they are taught to speak? Nor will I deny but there may be Faults on the other side, and that the Children of some Church-Men may have more than ought of their Parents's Resentments instilled into them.

If we mean to keep up our Differences to the end of the World, this is the way: But if we be weary of them, as 'tis time we should, it behooves us to consider of another Course. The present Generation is too envenomed, it's Prejudices too inveterate, to hope it should mend it's Manners. No matter therefore how soon it went off, and followed those who are gone before, so we could have the comfortable Prospect of a better to come after it. And that depends on the Temper in which those Children are bred, who are to tread this Stage of Life when we have quitted it. On which, they must Act the same Part, and repeat over the same Roolle we have done, if they must live amidst the same Contention and Strife, and see no quieter Days than we have seen, I cannot but behold them with pity, and think it had been happier for them (had God so pleased) if from their Cradles they had made the first step to their Graves.

But if instead of being left to pursue the Quarrel begun by their Fathers, and trained up accordingly in Incour and Hatred, they had their tender Minds formed into mild and gentle Dispositions; seasoned with Humility, Modesty, and a decent Regard for Men; with Tempers thus moulded and framed, they would, at their setting out into the World, come prepared to meet their Neighbours and Fellow-Citizens with Complacency and Benevolence, and converse friendly with them, though of contrary Perswasions



swasions; whereby the Peace at least of Society would be preserved, if no nearer approach could be made to an Agreement in Religion. And so I pass to my *Fifth Observation*,

V. The Necessity of a good Education to be given to Children; which then only is to be accounted such when at the same time that they are instructed in the Principles of sound Religion, they are taught Good Manners also.

The Knowledge of God their Maker, and of the Duty they owe him, ought no doubt to go first, and challenges the principal Place; but Good Manners must come next, without which even the Knowledge of Religion may happen to signify very little, because there may be a sort of Ill-manners that shall destroy and defeat all Religion.

Are there not some so Ill-mannered as to affront and revile Almighty God himself? 'Tis hardly conceivable to what degree of Wickedness, a rude and petulant Spirit may carry Men. It flies at every thing. Against it nothing can be safe, no Character, no Rank, no Preeminence among Men, no Laws, no Government, no Majesty of Crowned Heads. Having trod these under Foot, the next that comes to be insulted is the great Ruler of the World, and Author of all our Beings. This is horrible Rudeness and Ill-manners you will allow: But have you never known Wretches in whom not the least Sign or Shew could be discerned of Awe and Reverence for these? In some indeed, especially of the meaner sort, it may be sottish Ignorance and Stupidity; and were it no other than so, still it proves the necessity of such an Education as may keep them, if possible, from degenerating so much into Brutes. But in most, 'tis Headiness and Insolence of Temper; 'tis a stubborn refractory Humour that will bend to nothing, and bear no Check or Controul upon it.

There is an Evil Nature that sometimes discovers itself very early in Children, and threatens War and Mischief



mischief to the World, if ever it grows up to Man-  
 ed. No way to deal with it but by taming it whilst  
 ung, as we do Bears, and Wolves, and other Sa-  
 ge Creatures. By the Discipline of Good Manners  
 w, it may be brought to submit to the Discipline of  
 iety and Government hereafter, which otherwise  
 not likely it ever will do.

And if on such an Evil Nature, remaining uncor-  
 red through Defect of Education, as on a crabbed  
 ck, comes to be grafted and superadded in after-time  
 at sowre Zeal of which I have spoke before, as too  
 en it happens, how harsh must the Fruit be which  
 h a Tree doth yield! How needs must it set every  
 ly's teeth on edge that tastes of it! That is, to speak  
 hout Figure, how unfit must such an one be to  
 verse with the rest of Mankind, and to discharge  
 y Civil friendly Office of Life! How morose and ill-  
 ditioned in his whole Behaviour! An inbred undif-  
 lined Ferity of Nature, mingled with Wrath and Bit-  
 terness on the score of Religion, must make a strange  
 compound, when they meet in the same Person.

And where this Temper possesseth Numbers and Mul-  
 tudes, as it cannot but be very grievous and irksome  
 to other more humanized and civilized People, who  
 would be glad to live easy with all the World, so I see  
 how any Society can bear it self against it. It  
 must subvert all Order, and undermine all Foundations  
 of the Common Peace and Tranquillity. No endea-  
 vours therefore should be wanting to bridle it betimes,  
 and hinder it from getting to a head: And the Means  
 most likely to avail to that end, is such an Education  
 given to Children as may sweeten their Natures, and en-  
 deavour to make them with peaceable and governable Dispositions.  
*It is good for a Man that he bear the Yoke in his Youth,*  
 as the Scripture †; that is, that he learn Docility  
 and Obedience betimes, before Age and Years have  
 hardened the Mind quite untractable. Let Children  
 be inured and accustomed to bend their Wills

† Lam. iii. 27.

to due Compliances, to bear without contradiction a  
 straint upon their Fancies and Humours, Passions and  
 Inclinations; and not to stand stiffly and obstinate  
 out, against every thing which possibly may not please  
 them. Let them be taught to have a great Honour  
 for their Superiors, and Reverence for the Institu-  
 tions of their Country: To defer to the Authority  
 and Judgment of their Governors and Teachers  
 and not think themselves wiser and more knowing  
 than they. Let every Seed of Pride, Conceitedness  
 and Opinionativeness be narrowly watched, and care-  
 fully weeded out of them, and humble and modest  
 Thoughts be made to succeed in the room. Above  
 all, let them be cautioned against Religious Pride  
 or boasting of Spiritual Prerogatives in which they may  
 think to excell. The Knowledge, Gifts, and Graces  
 of God, are matter of Thankfulness to the great Author  
 of them, not of Censoriousness or Contempt of others.  
 Let this Maxim be deeply inculcated into them  
 That the surest Sign of Grace, and true Religion,  
 is a charitable, meek, and humble Spirit. In their  
 outward Carriage, let all haughty and disdainful Look-  
 ing, arrogant Gestures, rude and provoking Actions,  
 severely rebuked; no malapert Language, no reviling  
 Speeches, suffered to come out of their Mouths. Let  
 them be made to understand, that even to their In-  
 feriors they owe a Condescension, and that in the  
 meanest Person there is that which is respectable, as  
 Human Nature, much more our Common Christiani-  
 ty. In a word, to be courteous and affable, fearful of  
 giving Offense; not contentious and disputatious, but  
 flexible and yielding; not peevish and testy, but  
 calm and temperate; to live within Rules, and keep  
 to Decencies; to do always that which is becoming  
 to render to every one that which is his due, Submis-  
 sion to some, Civil Respect to others, Universal Be-  
 nevolence to all; This, I say, and possibly more which  
 I have omitted, is what Children should have in-  
 stilled into their Practice now, in order to a regular  
 Conduct and Deportment hereafter; and this is what  
 I understand by *Good Manners*.

There is indeed another sort of Thing called by that Name, which would not deserve mention, but the Folly of some Parents who lay great Stress on it, and make the best part of their Children's Education to consist in it. I mean a certain Punctuality and Ceremoniousness of Demeanour, conversant about Modes, and Forms, and I know not what; which when Children, with a great deal of pain and expence, have got some attainment in, they are said to be *well-bred*, or *well-mannered*. Of whatever Use this *Breeding* may be among some Ranks of People, as it conduces nothing to Virtue, so it is not the Good Manners of which I am speaking. In Low Life there is little occasion for Ceremony, but there is for Good Manners in every State of Life. Briefly, the Good Manners which I here propound, is a thing above the trifling Education of a *Dancing-School*. It is a Complex of sundry Virtuous Habits, planted in the Mind and cultivated, which grace and adorn it, subdue every ill-natured Passion and Passion in it, and thence exert themselves suitably in the Outward Person; giving Benignity of Aspect, Sweetness of Conversation, a general Friendliness and Obligingness in the whole Behaviour. So that indeed most, if not all, the Social Virtues, may be understood as comprehended in this one Word, *Good Manners*. Now let it be considered what a happy Change such Nuture given to Children, and growing up with them, must in all likelihood produce in the next generation. It would renew the face of the World. Of every Wilderness that it now is, where Men, as untaught as Wild-beasts, range licentiously, biting and tearing one another, it would make it a Habitation of Reasonable Creatures. Then would there be Concord and Harmony in Societies, and not as it is now, fighting and clashing, Variance and Strife. But the most blessed Effect of all is, that, like Water thrown on a Flame, it would allay those intemperate Heats which are kindled by Difference in Religion. Not that it would end all Disputes at once, but it would shake off that Sharpness and Acrimony that accompanies

them, and does all the mischief. Though it might not presently reconcile Opinions, it would reconcile Affections, which would be a great step to the other. For who knows what might follow, when that angry stomachful Zeal was wrought off, which keeps Men at funder, many times more than the Things themselves do, about which they differ? This seems very plain, that a Civil Good Mannered Treatment to each other, would beget Love, and nourish mutual Good-will; and there is nothing that may not be expected from those excellent Virtues, where they sit warm upon the Hearts of Men.

The Sum of all that has been said amounts to this, that Difference in Religion, not necessarily, but by accident, and through the Corruption of Men, introduces Rudeness and Ill-manners; and Rudeness and Ill-manners widen the Breach, and alienate Men more and more from one another. Take away this Rudeness and Ill-manners, or (which is more practicable) let them be prevented by a good Nurture and Education of Children, and you remove the greatest Obstacle to an Union of Minds, and probably also of Judgments and Sentiments. But I hasten to my *Sixth Observation*.

VI. That the many *Charity-Schools* dispersed throughout the Kingdom, may be made greatly serviceable to that good purpose.

I shall bring what I have to say on this Head into a very short Compass; because I am not considering these Schools with respect to all the excellent Ends, and Uses, for which they are admirably calculated, but in that single View only which the Subject I am upon leads me to take of them.

They must needs be the greatest Strangers to Good Manners, who through Poverty, and the straitness of their Circumstances in the World, are bereaved of the Means of a Virtuous Education. And accordingly, where is so much wicked Rudeness, as among the Meaner and Poorer sort of People? How little Sense have they of Goodness, or of Duty either to God or to Man! What therefore doth particularly recommend the



se Schools, is their being designed for the Benefit  
 such Poor People's Children, as without this Charity  
 st remain destitute of all Instruction, and abandoned  
 the Wildness of untaught and uncultivated Nature.  
 In a Nation constituted as we are, the want of Good  
 manners in those of the lowest Rank, is of worse con-  
 sequence, and more pernicious to the Publick, than in  
 countreys where they are kept in greater Subjection,  
 and allowed no Capacity to act in, that can enable  
 them to do much hurt. Here, they have Freedoms and  
 liberties, that set them almost upon a level with  
 their Betters, and give them the Privilege of being  
 very troublesome, and very mischievous and dange-  
 rous also, if they be very Ill-mannered, as too frequent-  
 ly they are. Of Religion they know nothing, or  
 that is next to nothing, yet seldom fail to be of a  
 party, and to espouse it with so much more Warmth  
 as they less understand the Matters in question, and  
 when their Zeal is all Madness and Extravagance.  
 This is a sore Evil, not to be remedied, as the Case  
 stands with us, but by taking the Children of such  
 people under the Publick Care, and committing their  
 education to better Hands than of their own Parents.  
 And had nothing more than this been considered in  
 the first Institution of *Charity-Schools*, it alone were e-  
 nough to admonish of the necessity of them. Pity only  
 is, that their Number should not yet be in propor-  
 tion to their Usefulness; that to render the Good ac-  
 quiring from them more general and diffusive, there  
 should not at least One in every populous Parish  
 throughout the Nation. Until it shall please God  
 to enlarge Men's Hearts, for promoting and extend-  
 ing further so excellent a Work, we must be glad to  
 have these Schools where indeed they are principally  
 wanted; that is to say, in Cities and greater Towns,  
 which being Places of Converse and Society, of Com-  
 munity and Resort, need more than others to have Rude-  
 ness and Ill-manners driven out of them. Such Pla-  
 ces do also most abound with those Poor Children,  
 who are the proper Objects of this Charity.

One thing I would insinuate, because I doubt Practice runs commonly to the contrary. 'Tis that the choice of Children to be taken into these Schools a more special regard be had to Families where there is least of Religion and Good Manners. On other occasions, those Poor in whom we see a Fear of God and a peaceable Behaviour, have the justest title to claim to our Kindness, and to our Alms. But in the Case before us, it seems to be otherwise. This Charity is certainly best bestowed and applied, where it rescues an Unhappy Child out of the hands of Parents, of whom he can only learn to be, like them, very wicked and very rude.

I shall now *in the last Place*, and by way of Conclusion, endeavour to stir up your Bounty and Liberality, for the support of *this School* set up among your selves.

And I hope I need not use many Words to prevail with you. If you are convinced that what I have suggested has any weight in it, that I have made a true and faithful Representation of things, you must think there is a necessity for laying the Foundation of a better-mannered World: And then, as you to whom God has afforded Abilities, will take heed to the Manners of your own Children, and spare nothing to have their Minds cultivated with all the Virtues both of a Civil and a Religious Life; so you will not deny your Charitable Help and Assistance for the Instruction of poor Creatures, whom otherwise want of Means must leave a Prey to every Brutish Passion and Vice.

Therein you will do an Act, not only of great Compassion to them, but of no less Good to your selves. You think that Money well laid out, which you give to have your Streets cleansed, and the Dirt and Filth removed out of them. And can there be a greater Annoyance than loose and disorderly Children, filling the Streets of a Town with unseemly Noise and Clamour, swearing, cursing, brawling and quarrelling, perhaps (like those in the Text) abusing and affronting Strangers and Travellers as they pass by

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These generally are the Children of the Poor, whom Indigence keeps at home, deprived of the Benefit of Schools. Mark one of those Children, and observe what from such a Beginning he grows up to! At the time he comes to be a Man, 'tis odds if you have him not a Wretch, without Principles, without Morals, ready for any Wickedness of Tongue or Hand, and against whom the Community and Neighbourhood must guard as against a dangerous Person. A small Charity given for his Education, might have made another Man of him.

There is sometimes an Emulation more prevalent than all Arguments, and when it happens to be about Things in themselves commendable and praiseworthy, we cannot do amiss to encourage it. Let me therefore put you in mind of *that School* \* which stands in opposition to *this*. Will you suffer your Zeal to be out-done in Zeal, and to have your Charity eclipsed by the greater Beneficence of others?

And since I have mentioned *that School*, I cannot but make it my earnest desire, that they who are concerned in it, (and peradventure some may be here present who are so) would on their Part, sincerely endeavour to create in their Disciples, the same modest and peaceable Dispositions, which I have been pleading for on the other Side: So that the only Competition betwixt the Two Schools be, which shall have the Glory of breeding up, and sending out into the world, the Civilest and the Best mannered Youths. Unless both Schools concur in this Design, and pursue it jointly as their End, we labour in vain, and you must remain a Divided Town, and an Uneasy People for ever.

But to bring back my Discourse to you, whom I was soliciting in behalf of this your School, I ought to distinguish betwixt two sorts of Persons among you: You, who by your *Generous Subscriptions* have given a Being to this School, and have fixed it on

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\* The *Charity-School* set up by the Dissenters in St. Albans.



a Bottom to be depended upon: And You, who are now engaging your selves, wait these *Quarterly Collections* to shew your Affection and Good-will to it. To the former, Praise and Thanks are due, and no other exhortation seems necessary but this short one of the Apostle, *not to faint, and be weary of well-doing* \* the latter, I am particularly to address at this Time as they at whose hands we crave and hope for farther Aid and Supply, to be added to the more certain Gift of others.

There are no Motives of any sort to Charity, which I could not urge and apply with great advantage on this Occasion. But I am unwilling to enter upon a large a Topick, and you have heard me with patience long enough already. There is That here will speak more movingly and feelingly than I can do, whatever Words I might use; I mean the Sight and Presence of these Poor Children, standing before you. Turn off your Eyes from me, and look upon them! You cannot do it, and not have your Hearts melted in Pity towards them. You cannot do it, and not thank God for the Opportunity he here presents to you, of doing the best Work, and the most acceptable to him of any that Men can do in this World, viz. helping to set others forward in the way of Virtue. And being perswaded of you, I take my leave, and dismiss you with my hearty Prayer to the same gracious and good God, for his Blessing on the School, and on every Creditable Hand that contributes to the Support of it.

*And the God of Peace, who brought again from the Dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, by the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every Good Work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his Sight through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be Glory for ever ever. Amen.*

F I N I S.

